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1988/03/26



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RELEASED

United States Department of State

Washington, D. C. 20520

March 10, 1979

E18

ACTION MEMORANDUM
SECRET

TO: The Secretary

THROUGH: P - Mr. Armacost

FROM: EAP - Gaston Sigur
PM - H. Allen Holmes

SUBJECT: Chinese Sale of Missiles to Saudi Arabia: Letter to PRC Foreign Minister

ISSUE FOR DECISION

Whether to sign the attached letter to PRC Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian and approve the attached talking points for use by Mike Armacost and Win Lord with the Chinese.

BACKGROUND

During your March 6 dinner with PRC Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian, you raised the issue of Chinese transfer of C8S-2 intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBM's) to Saudi Arabia. Foreign Minister Wu replied that the PRC would not transfer nuclear weapons to third countries, an assurance expanded on by PRC Charge Qian to Under Secretary Armacost on March 17. The President and Dick Murphy have also raised this issue with the Saudis and have received assurances that the Saudis will not acquire nuclear weapons.

Welcome as these assurances are, we believe that the most troublesome aspect of this development relates to the dangers inherent in the proliferation of ballistic missile systems capable of delivering conventional, chemical, or nuclear warheads. The Chinese sale of intermediate range ballistic missiles to Saudi Arabia lends added urgency to the need to establish a broader international regime controlling the dissemination of these systems. Short of this, we need a better understanding of China's attitude on this matter, which has the potential of undermining support for our relationship with Beijing.

Under these circumstances, we consider it desirable for you to write Foreign Minister Wu to reiterate our concern over China's introduction of IRBM's into the Middle East and to urge the prompt initiation of a more effective dialogue between us on controlling the transfer of missile technologies. This

United States Department of State
Office of FOI, Privacy, & Classification Review
Review Authority: LINDSTROM, RALPH
Date: 03/10/94
Case ID: 91037303

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Issue is broader than the question of the Saudi missiles, on which we have pressed the Saudis unsuccessfully to establish a verification regime to provide assurance that the Saudi installations remain non-nuclear. In light of strong Saudi opposition to a verification regime, we see no utility in raising the verification issue with the Chinese at this time.

In order to demonstrate the seriousness with which we view the Chinese sale of missiles to Saudi Arabia, we propose parallel demarches here by Mike Armacost and in Beijing by Win Lord to present your letter. Proposed talking points for those meetings are attached at Tab 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That you sign the attached letter at Tab 1 to Foreign Minister Wu. *Lox*
2. That you approve the talking points at Tab 2 for Mike and Win Lord to use with the Chinese when delivering your letter.

Approve X Disapprove

Attachments:

- Tab 1 - Letter to PRC Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian
- Tab 2 - Proposed Talking Points

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ANNOTATED EXCISED COPY FOLLOWS

RELEASED IN PART
B1,A3,A5

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United States Department of State

Washington, D. C. 20520

March 26, 1988

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ACTION MEMORANDUM *MS*
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SECRET

United States Department of State
Office of FOI, Privacy, & Classification Review
Review Authority: AINSWORTH, THOMAS
Date: 11/25/94
Case ID: 9103730

TO: The Secretary

THROUGH: P - Mr. Armacost *MA*

FROM: EAP - Gaston Sigur *JS*
PM - H. Allen Holmes *AB*

SUBJECT: Chinese Sale of Missiles to Saudi Arabia: Letter to PRC Foreign Minister

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ISSUE FOR DECISION

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BACKGROUND

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B1,A5,A3

B1,A5

[REDACTED] we believe that the most troublesome aspect of this development relates to the dangers inherent in the proliferation of ballistic missile systems capable of delivering conventional, chemical, or nuclear warheads. The Chinese sale of intermediate range ballistic missiles to Saudi Arabia lends added urgency to the need to establish a broader international regime controlling the dissemination of these systems. Short of this, we need a better understanding of China's attitude on this matter, which has the potential of undermining support for our relationship with Beijing.

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B1,A5

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Approve X

Disapprove

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Tab 1 - Letter to PRC Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian

Tab 2 - Proposed Talking Points

SECRET